

THC (MARIJUANA)



THC Update Content:

- ✦ ***Introduction***
- ✦ ***Marijuana Pharmacology & Effects***
- ✦ ***Urinalysis & Drug Lab Procedures***

Marijuana Bud



Copyright 2000 Publishers Group
www.streetdrugs.org

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

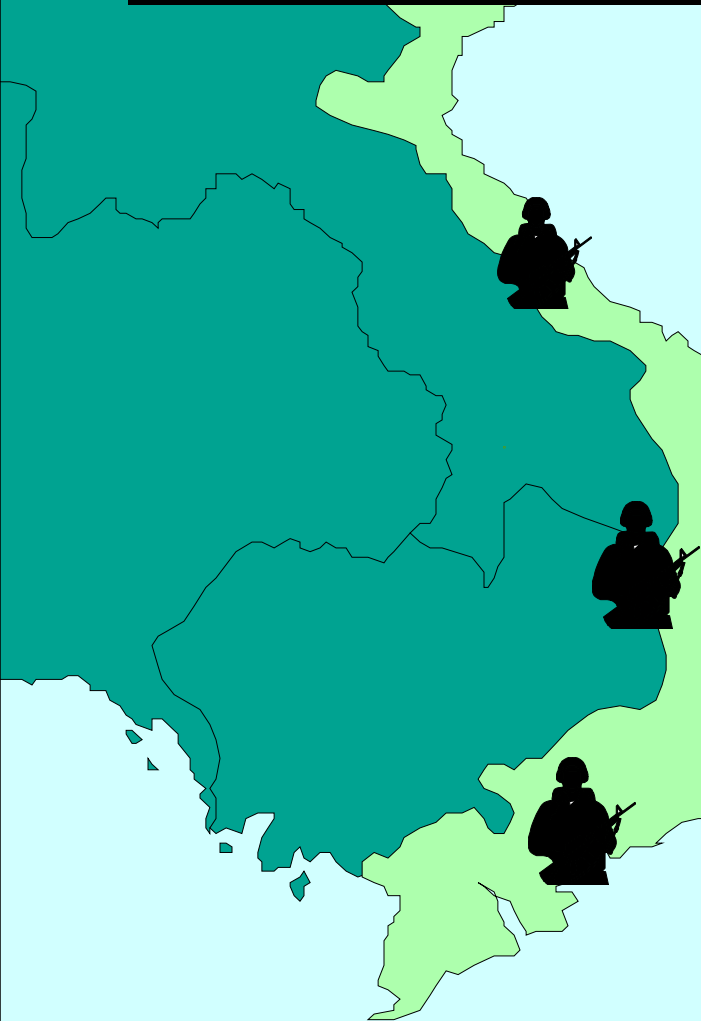
- ✦ **Reduce the impact of THC use on the army.**
- ✦ **Understand the effects of THC on the body and brain.**
- ✦ **To diminish “barracks lawyer” tales.**






INTRODUCTION

- ✦ **Marijuana is still the #1 illicit drug of choice in the ARMY**
- ✦ **Marijuana is considered to be a gateway drug to other drug use and abuse.**
- ✦ **Army Drug Policy - “ZERO TOLERANCE”**
- ✦ **ARMY DRUG USE 1998 DOD SURVEY**
 - ✦ **9.8 % (7.7% is Marijuana) used in the past 12 months**



Introduction: 1960's - 1970's



-  **Aftermath of Vietnam**
-  **Drug treatment centers opened.**
-  **A decade of change**
-  **Drug screening labs upgraded to forensic**
-  **Mandatory urinalysis**

Introduction: War on Drugs

- ✦ **1980 33% Of The Military Reported Illicit Drug Use**
- ✦ **1981 - U.S.S. NIMITZ Crash of Marine Corps EA-6B**
- ✦ **Autopsies Of Killed Sailors And Marines Revealed THC in Six Bodies**
- ✦ **DOD Declared “War On Drugs.”**

Introduction: Attitudes

- ✦ **Shifting attitudes among parents of today's generation who themselves used marijuana in the 60's -70's.**



Introduction: Trends

- ✦ **More intense patterns of marijuana abuse such as “Blunt” marijuana cigars.**
- ✦ **Changes in public perception about marijuana as reflected by open use of the drug in film, media, musical recordings and rock or rap videos.**
- ✦ **\$\$ Marijuana can sell for \$600 an ounce, \$8,000 a pound, \$20 for a blunt cigar.**

Introduction: Trends

- ✦ **Pulmonary risks of smoking marijuana are often ignored.**
- ✦ **Addiction is associated with alcohol and other drugs - not marijuana.**
- ✦ **THC is psychologically addictive - abuse and addiction is frequently denied.**

Pharmacology Of Marijuana

- ✦ Marijuana is a psychoactive or mind altering drug.
- ✦ Psychoactive drugs can produce a mind state similar to psychosis.
 - ✦ **Psychosis** - A major mental disorder in which the personality is very seriously disorganized.

Pharmacology Of Marijuana

- ✦ **Marijuana is the term used in the U.S. to refer to the cannabis plant.**
- ✦ **Delta 9 - Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC)**
is the active ingredient that causes the “high”.
- ✦ **THC is much stronger today than in the 1960's:**
 - ✦ **1% THC content in 1960's**
 - ✦ **3 - 28% today**

Pharmacology Of Marijuana

- ✦ Recent domestic report revealed 29.86% THC content.
- ✦ Much more dangerous today.
- ✦ Mixing other drugs with THC by drug dealers and users.



Three Basic Forms

- ✦ **Marijuana** - Made from the leaves, flowers or stems of the hemp plant.
- ✦ **Hash/Hashish** - Concentrated form of marijuana by compressing marijuana resins into small blocks.
- ✦ **Hash Oil** - Made by soaking marijuana in a chemical solvent (such as rubbing alcohol) and then evaporating the solvent to obtain an oil concentrate.

Pharmacology

- **When smoked, the marijuana is absorbed through the capillaries in the lungs.**
- **When the marijuana is eaten, the chemical is absorbed into the small intestine.**



Acute Effects

- **Euphoria**
- **Short Term Memory Loss**
- **Increased Appetite**
- **Bloodshot Eyes**
- **Dry Mouth/Throat**
- **Sleepiness**



- **Increased Heart Rate**
- **Loss of Coordination**
- **Paranoia**
- **Hallucinations**
- **Chronic Panic Attacks**
- **Psychosis**

Acute Effects

- **Marijuana smoke contains more tar and cancer causing substances than tobacco smoke.**
- **Smoking one joint = five cigarettes.**
- **With one puff you inhale 150 cancer - causing substances and twice as much tar as with tobacco.**

Acute Effects

- **Smoking marijuana can cause:**
 - **Bronchitis**
 - **Lung cancer**
 - **Brain damage**
- **Smoking marijuana causes some neurotransmitters to clump up and become inactive.**
- **Neurotransmitters send messages throughout the brain for body functions.**
- **Interferes with thinking, ability to focus, memory lapses.**

Long Term Effects - Male Specific

- **Reduces male hormone testosterone.**
- **Sex organs do not function properly.**
- **Reduces sperm count in adult males.**
- **Ages 10-20 is when male sex organs are maturing.**
- **Use can cause long-term negative affects on sex organs.**

Long Term Effects - Female Specific

- **Testosterone increases causing facial hair, more body hair and acne.**
- **Decreased sexual pleasure.**
- **Disrupts menstrual cycles and ovulation.**

“Our First Line of Defense”



**The ARMY
URINALYSIS
IS
PROGRAM**





Army Drug Screening Labs

- ▣ **Every specimen screened for the following drugs:**
 - ▣ **THC, Cocaine, Amphetamines (includes Methamphetamines, Ecstasy and other designer drugs)**
 - ▣ **At least one of the following:**
 - ▣ **Opiates (Codeine, Morphine, Heroin)**
 - ▣ **PCP**
 - ▣ **LSD**
 - ▣ **Barbiturates**
 - ▣ **Steroids can be checked upon request at the UCLA Olympic analytical drug lab.**



Army Drug Lab Procedures

- **All samples are checked**
- **Each drug has a cut-off level established by DOD.**
- **3rd verification check (confirmation) - if positive 1st & 2nd time.**



Army Drug Lab Procedures

- **Positive samples:**
 - **Stored in original bottle and frozen for 1 year**
 - **Can be extended upon request**
 - **Suspected adulteration:**
 - **Message sent to command stating adulteration**
 - **C.O. Can still process or follow-up with another sample**



THC and Alcohol

- Alcohol's relationship to other drugs
- Alcohol -member of depressant family
- Synergistic with other drugs
- $1 + 1 = 3$??
- Cross addictive to other drugs
- Cross tolerant to many other drugs
- Effects on judgment can lead to illicit THC or other drug use



UNITED STATES ARMY CENTER FOR SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROGRAMS



**For more Information Contact:
ACSAP**

E-mail: upl.acsap@usadaoa-emh1.army.mil